Prevalence
An estimated 72,000 children (or 3% of all children who used the internet at any location between April 2008 and April 2009) had experienced one or more personal safety or security problems online at some time in their life.

The most common problems were:

- accessing inappropriate material,
- having strangers ask for or gain access to personal information, and
- experiencing online bullying or threatening behaviour.


Danger signs
- Your child constantly sits on the computer in chat rooms or instant messaging, from straight after school to very late at night
- Your child begins showing unexplained money or items that come from "a friend you don't know"
- Your child starts being secretive about what they are doing online – this could include anything from minimising screens as you walk past to not letting you see their blogs/chat/social media sites


Tips for parents:

EDUCATE

- Find out about the internet.
- Make children aware of risks.
  - Don’t take everything at face value – people aren’t always honest online.
- Teach children cybersafety rules:
  - Always keep passwords secret.
  - Think before posting information – once posted it’s difficult to remove.
  - Never give out identifying information such as home address, school name or telephone number.
  - Set profile to ‘private’.
  - Use privacy settings when posting photos online.
  - Avoid responding to messages from unrecognised email addresses.
  - Never click on links in emails from strangers.
  - Don’t accept offers that seem too good to be true.
  - If a threatening message is received they should 'STOP, BLOCK, TELL'.
EMPOWER
● Encourage and support children in their internet use.
● Reassure your children that they can tell you anything without fear of losing internet access.

MAKE THE COMPUTER SAFE
● Set up the computer with an internet filter.
● Install security software such as anti-virus, anti-spam, pop-up stoppers and firewalls.

SUPERVISE
● Supervise children’s activities on all devices – keep computers in public areas.
● Set a technology curfew – all devices gathered each evening for recharging.
● If you suspect your child has been contacted by a predator, try to save a copy of the chat log (or whatever form the contact takes) for evidence. Call Crime Stoppers 24-hour line 1800 333 000 to make a formal complaint.
● Call 000 if you believe a child to be in immediate danger.
● Telephone the Cybersafety Contact Centre 1800 880 176 for information or advice.

Useful Websites
Cybersmart is a national cybersafety and cybersecurity education program managed by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA)

This is the Department of Education & Communities’ website for practical help for parents.

● [www.thinkuknow.org.au](http://www.thinkuknow.org.au)
ThinkUKnow Australia is a partnership between the Australian Federal Police and Microsoft.

Your children will be using computers and the technology for the rest of their lives. You are in the great position of being able to get them off to a safe, positive start.

Whilst the information contained in this document has been presented with all due care, Nepean Blue Mountains and Western Sydney Local Health Districts are not in any way liable for the accuracy of the information. Although care has been taken in providing these links as suitable reference sources, it is the responsibility of the users to make their own investigations, decisions, enquiries about the information retrieved from them.